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Letter dated 23 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the anniversary of the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Ukraine, by the Russian Federation (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the statement issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yuriy **Sergeyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 23 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the one-year anniversary of the illegal occupation by the Russian Federation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea

17 March 2015

These days mark a year since the illegal occupation by the Russian Federation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol.

By committing this international crime, Russia violated basic principles of international law and European order, destroyed the existing balance of power in the region, and triggered a security crisis in Europe — the largest one since the Second World War.

In General Assembly resolution 68/262 of 27 March 2014, entitled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine", the international community has given a clear answer to the attempts of Russian invaders to legitimize their illegal actions by staging an illegal, falsified "referendum" conducted under the muzzles of Russian arms, and underscored that "having no validity, [the referendum] cannot form the basis for any alteration of the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or of the city of Sevastopol". The whole civilized world imposed sanctions on Russia for its blatant disregard of the fundamental principles of international law.

The entire world is rightfully indignant owing to the fact that, by occupying Crimea, Russian authorities have brought an atmosphere of fear, injustice and repression to the peninsula. Knowingly and with impunity, Russia continues violating human rights in the occupied territory, terrorizing those who disagree, especially Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, conducting detentions and searches, chasing and detaining civic activists and waging a whole war against independent media and journalists.

Ukrainians in Crimea have no access to education in the Ukrainian language and to Ukrainian media. During the occupation, more than 20,000 Ukrainians were forced to leave Crimea.

Russia is pursuing a targeted robbery of Ukraine. More than 400 Ukrainian enterprises have been unlawfully nationalized; the bowels of Ukraine are being illegally used; 18 gas fields have been seized. The adventurous and criminal policy of the occupational authorities leads Crimea to economic, social and environmental disaster. The Ukrainian tourist pearl has been turned into a military base where Russia, in violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, has threatened to deploy nuclear weapons, posing a real threat not only to regional but also to global security.

Despite the difficulties that Ukrainian citizens-residents of Crimea are now facing, we want to assure all our compatriots that Ukraine is doing and will do everything possible to restore its control over the peninsula.

Crimea was, is and will remain an integral part of the sovereign territory of Ukraine.

The Russian aggressor and occupier will be held accountable for all the crimes committed.

We call upon the international community to pay greater attention to occupied Crimea and consolidate international pressure on Russia in order to ensure its immediate return to the stream of international law, the abolition of all its illegal decisions that have led to the temporary occupation of the Ukrainian territory, and compensation for the damages caused by the Russian Federation to Ukraine and its citizens.